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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2134  
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE  
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 0037  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 0229  
RHHMUNA/CDRUSPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//OSD/ISA/AP// PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 003085

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USPACOM ALSO FOR FPA HUSO  
SECDEF/OSD/ISA/AP FOR ALLEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/24/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [ASEAN](#) [LE](#) [IS](#) [RP](#)  
SUBJECT: CALLING FOR A BALANCED ASEAN STATEMENT ON MIDDLE  
EAST

REF: STATE 120236

Classified By: A/DCM Scott Bellard for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) The Ambassador discussed the situation in the Middle East (reftel) with Foreign Secretary Romulo on July 23, emphasizing that the United States was working hard to achieve a durable cessation to the current violence in the Middle East and to ease the plight of innocent people. She urged the Philippines to work with other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to avoid any unbalanced statements on the crisis at their upcoming meetings in Kuala Lumpur.

¶2. (C) Secretary Romulo said he was watching events in the Middle East carefully, especially given the more than 30,000 overseas Filipino workers in Lebanon. (The GRP has been able so far to repatriate 232 citizens from Lebanon to Manila, with dozens still awaiting repatriation in Damascus.) He said he hoped to discuss the situation with the Secretary on the margins of the ASEAN Regional Forum in Kuala Lumpur, but could make no commitment as to the content of any ASEAN statement. He praised Secretary Rice for her tireless efforts.

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Kenney